



TREASURER-TAX COLLECTOR COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

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DAN McALLISTER
Treasurer-Tax Collector



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Record Number of Property Tax Bills to be Mailed Beginning TODAY!

County Receives National Award for Tax Bill Makeover

San Diego County Treasurer-Tax Collector Dan McAllister announced today that over the next 10 days, more than 955,000 redesigned and newly updated statements and secured property tax bills will be mailed to San Diego County property owners. In all, the property tax bills should generate a record \$3,969,441,054.92 for the 2006-2007 tax year.

McAllister also announced that the County and his office recently received a national award from the National Association of Counties (NACO) for the complete design makeover given to the tax bill in 2004.

“Our number one goal in the Treasurer-Tax Collector’s Office is customer service. We want to deliver fast, friendly and efficient services to taxpayers. When we first embarked upon the efforts to redesign the property tax bill in early 2004, we were not quite certain we knew where the project would take us. However, as we sought and gathered more and more ideas from taxpayers throughout the County, we became convinced that we needed to create a new tax bill that would present information in a more concise and customer friendly manner,” McAllister said.

The tax bill overhaul was the first major format change to the tax bill in more than half a century. Since the first new tax bill was mailed in September 2004, the Treasurer-Tax Collector’s Office has continued to solicit ideas from San Diegans as to how the office can make the bills even better.

“Each year my staff and I make every effort possible to include many of the great suggestions we receive from taxpayers throughout the County. I am proud of the efforts we have made to further enhance the quality and clarity of the San Diego County property tax bills again this year,” McAllister stated.

This year's tax bill changes feature further improvements to make the tax bills more user-friendly. Several of the new changes to the bill and insert include:

1. Highlighted "toll free" phone number at the top of the bill;
2. Clarification of tax payment due dates and penalty dates;
3. Unification of "parcel" and "bill number" into the same information field;
4. Color coding on each stub to better identify the type of bill;
5. Larger font size of the Treasurer-Tax Collector's website (bold red);
6. Colored water marks (secured, unsecured or supplemental) in the Tax Distribution box indicating type of tax bill for easier recordkeeping; and
7. Tax bill inserts will now contain "Definitions" that identify and define every information field on the tax bill.

"The bills that we are mailing are expected to generate almost \$4 billion which represents the largest single source of revenues to local governments, school and fire districts, and the County. This year, real property in San Diego County has a combined assessed valuation of nearly \$357.9 billion, an increase of \$38.5 billion over last year's total valuation. The valuation is the highest in County history. Under the guidelines established by Proposition 13 in 1978, counties in California collect 1% of their assessed valuation for real property. Additionally, counties may collect for voter approved bonds and special district fees where applicable," McAllister said.

Each year the billing process is triggered by completion of the "tax roll" by the County Assessor with individual bill payment calculations completed by the County Auditor. The statements and tax bills are then printed and mailed to property owners.

"This is a real team effort here at the County. We want to make sure that all property owners receive their tax bills in a timely manner so they can plan their payments and avoid any costly penalties," said McAllister. "Payments are due in two equal installments on November 1 and delinquent after December 11, 2006 (one day later than normal, due to December 10th falling on Sunday) and February 1 and delinquent after April 10, 2007. Late payments automatically trigger late charges of 10% on the first installment payment; an additional penalty of 10% plus a \$10 cost fee is applied on the second installment if it is late."

"Remarkably enough, and in spite of the best efforts of our team here at the County to assure proper current addresses of our property owners, an estimated 15,000 bills, or 1.7%, of all those we mail, will be returned as "undeliverable" by the U.S. Postal Service. It is important to remind taxpayers that even if they do not receive their property tax bills, **they are still responsible for payment of the tax bill.** Anyone who does not receive their property tax bill within the next three weeks should call the Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office at **(1-877-TAX-4SDC or 1-877-829-4732)** to obtain a copy," McAllister concluded.

For Taxpayers' convenience, information is available and payments can be made online at the Treasurer-Tax Collector Website: **www.sdtreastax.com**

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Information for Payment of Property Taxes

The following information is provided to facilitate property tax payments:

- **In-person comprehensive tax assistance and bill payment at five offices located throughout San Diego County:**

Downtown San Diego: 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 162
(County Administration Center)

El Cajon: 200 South Magnolia Avenue

Chula Vista: 590 Third Avenue

San Marcos: 141 East Carmel St. (NEW LOCATION)

Kearny Mesa: 9225 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard

- **Tax assistance and bill payment by phone.** Taxpayers can dial a toll-free number (**1-877-TAX-4SDC or 1-877-829-4732**) to speak with a Treasurer-Tax Collector team member between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Recorded information about the most frequently asked questions is also available at this number on a 24/7 basis. Both the live and recorded options are offered in English and in Spanish. Currently, taxpayers can pay their property tax bills by phone using VISA or Discover card. Credit card companies charge a transaction fee for payments made by credit card. The transaction fee breakdown is as follows:
 - VISA: 1.88%
 - Discover: sliding scale fee up to \$50

For the hearing or speech impaired, TTY telephone service is available at **1-877-735-2929**.

- **Online tax information and bill payment at www.sdtreastax.com.** To avoid a trip to a branch location, taxpayers can view and pay their property tax bill online. Currently, taxpayers can pay their property tax bills online using either e-check, VISA or MasterCard. The website uses secure, state-of-the-art technology designed to prevent fraud and invasion of taxpayers' privacy. Credit card companies charge a transaction fee for payments made by credit card. The transaction fee breakdown is as follows:
 - VISA: 1.88%
 - MasterCard: 1.88%
 - Discover: Sliding scale fee up to \$50

The Treasurer-Tax Collector's website now provides information in English and Spanish to make online navigation easier for taxpayers who prefer to obtain information about their tax payment and make online payments in Spanish. Taxpayers wishing to view the Treasurer-Tax Collector's website in Spanish should go to **www.sdtreastax.com**, and then select the "**Español**" option on the homepage.

For the hearing or speech impaired, a TTY "Click to Chat" feature is available on the Treasurer-Tax Collector's website at www.sdtreastax.com to communicate with a Treasurer-Tax Collector team member.